



# THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

## WATER RESOURCES COMMISSION

### WRC DECISION

#### Request for Determination of Applicability or Insignificance Under the Interbasin Transfer Act

#### MDC Wastewater Facilities Plan for Holden and West Boylston

AUGUST 8, 1996

#### DECISION

On August 8, 1996 the Water Resources Commission voted to find that the Interbasin Transfer Act is **not applicable** to the MDC Wastewater Facilities Plan for Holden and West Boylston.

#### Background

On June 13, 1996, the Massachusetts Water Resources Commission (WRC) received a request for determination of applicability or insignificance under the Interbasin Transfer Act (M.G.L. Chapter 21, §§ 8B-8D) from the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) for a project to extend sewer service to portions of Holden and West Boylston. Water supply sources for these towns are located within the Nashua River basin. Wastewater in the proposed project area is currently discharged through on-site septic systems. The areas to be sewered are within the watershed of the Wachusett Reservoir, in the Nashua River basin. A 1990 study conducted by the MDC determined that on-site wastewater disposal within this area was negatively impacting the water quality of the Wachusett Reservoir.

The proposed sewage collection system will transport wastewater to the Upper Blackstone Water Pollution Control Abatement District (UBWPCAD) operated by the City of Worcester, in the Blackstone River basin. This project will result in an increase in interbasin transfer of up to 1.37 mgd of wastewater from West Boylston and up to 1.71 mgd of wastewater from Holden. Most of the wastewater generated by this project will be transferred out of basin via the existing Rutland-Holden Interceptor, however, up to 0.27 mgd of flow from the Industrial District of West Boylston, will be collected by the existing Maplewood Interceptor.

#### History

In 1978, The Department of Environmental Quality Engineering (now the Department of Environmental Protection) approved a facilities plan for the Rutland-Holden Relief Trunk Sewer. The project was designed to provide relief to the then-existing trunk sewer, which became operational in 1934. The relief sewer was designed to increase the capacity of the original sewer to handle existing peak flows and to "allow (for) the potential future municipal sewerage of existing and anticipated development areas generally to the west of the existing trunk sewer in Holden." (Wastewater Facilities Plan for the Rutland-Holden Trunk Sewer, 1978, p. VI-21). Facilities planning also included estimates of future wastewater generation from areas to the east of the existing trunk sewer in Holden. In addition, West Boylston was considered as a contiguous community in the facilities plan, with the potential for contributing flows to the relief sewer some time in the future.

The capacity of the then-existing Rutland-Holden Trunk Sewer was 2.1 mgd. The approved relief

sewer added 10.5 mgd, for a total capacity of 12.6 mgd. The relief sewer became operational in 1984. The City of Worcester limits flow from the collection area of the Rutland-Holden Trunk Sewer to 7.2 mgd. Current peak flows through the trunk sewer are 3.3 mgd. Added peak flows from the expanded collection area will not cause this limit to be exceeded.

The capacity of the Maplewood Interceptor is 6.05 mgd. Current peak flows through the Interceptor are 0.50 mgd. Additional peak flow from the Industrial area in West Boylston will not cause the capacity of the Maplewood Interceptor to be exceeded. The Maplewood Interceptor was in operation prior to 1940.

#### RATIONAL FOR RECOMMENDATION

- Although this project involves the construction of new sewer connections (including 7.2 miles of interceptors, 50.9 miles of laterals, 13.1 miles of force mains, 0.9 miles of pressure mains, and 23 pumping stations), these connections will feed into already existing interceptors, which were designed to handle flows specifically from the areas to be sewered. The hydraulic capacity of the interceptors which facilitate the interbasin transfer will not be increased.
- The Interbasin Transfer Regulations, 313 CMR 4.02(l) specifically exempt "the installation and use of water supply or wastewater facilities, which although not fully constructed and/or useable, had achieved MEPA compliance and approval by the Department of Environmental Quality Engineering (now DEP) prior to the effective date of the act (March 8, 1984)." The facilities plan for the 1978 Rutland-Holden Trunk Sewer included capacity for long-term phased-in connections for Holden and West Boylston. The facilities plan was approved prior to March 8, 1984.
- Water Resources Commission policy, as stated in A Guide to the Application of the Interbasin Transfer Act and Regulations (1985), exempts the extension of a wastewater collection system which does not increase the existing hydraulic capacity to transfer water out of a donor basin. The recommendation for this project, therefore, is consistent with past WRC decisions concerning the interbasin transfer of wastewater.

Because of these facts, the Water Resources Commission voted to find that Interbasin Transfer Act is **not applicable** to the MDC Wastewater Facilities Plan for Holden and West Boylston.